

### **EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT**

An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Emily C. Peyser on 19 September 2008.

The application has been amended as follows:

Claim 19, line 4, --said coupling device comprising a strap having a first portion and a second portion and each portion having a first side surface and a second side surface, -- has been inserted between the comma and "said".

Claim 19, line 6, "wherein said coupling device has a first side and a second side," has been deleted.

Claim 19, line 7, --surface of said first portion-- has been inserted between "side" and "to".

Claim 19, line 8, --surface of said first portion-- has been inserted between "side" and the comma.

Claim 23, line 4, -- said coupling device comprising a strap having a first portion and a second portion and each portion having a first side surface and a second side surface,-- has been inserted between the comma and "said"

Claim 23, line 6, "wherein said coupling device has a first side and a second side," has been deleted.

Claim 23, line 7, -- surface of said first portion -- has been inserted between "side" and "to".

Claim 23, line 8, -- surface of said first portion -- has been inserted between "side" and the comma.

Claim 26, line 4, -- said coupling device comprising a strap having a first portion and a second portion and each portion having a first side surface and a second side surface,-- has been inserted between the comma and "said"

Claim 26, between lines 6 and 7, "wherein said coupling device has a first side and a second side," has been deleted.

Claim 26, line 8, --surface-- has been inserted between "side" and "to" and - surface of said first portion -- has been inserted between "side" and the semicolon.

The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

For claim 19, Crouch (US 6,447,037) discloses a method of using a coupling device (10) for providing redundant attachment between an arm of a user and a device (26) having a closed handle (38) (Figs. 5 and 6). The method comprises (a) obtaining a coupling device (10) having first and second ends (16,18). The coupling device comprises a strap having a first end portion and a second end portion and each end portion having a first side surface and a second side surface (Figs. 1-6). The first end (16) includes a first loop (20) defining a first opening (22), the first loop is oriented in a

substantially open position (Fig. 1) and the second end (18) includes a second loop (20) defining a second opening (22). The first loop defining the first opening is formed by attaching a portion of the first side surface of one end portion to the first side surface of the opposite end portion (the coupling device is provided in a twisted state before the operation begins to facilitate routing of the second loop through the first loop and therefore no twisting operation is required during the method steps); (b) routing either the first loop or the second loop through the closed handle (Fig. 2); (c) moving a distal tip of the second loop toward the first opening without twisting the coupling device more than 45 degrees from a longitudinal axis of the coupling device (Fig. 3); (d) inserting the second loop through the first opening without twisting the coupling device more than 45 degrees from the longitudinal axis of the coupling device (Fig. 3); and (e) pulling the second loop through the first opening to tighten the coupling device to the closed handled device without twisting the coupling device more than 45 degrees from the longitudinal axis of the coupling device (Fig. 4). The first opening is sized substantially equal to the second opening. Crouch fails to disclose that the first opening is sized to be smaller than the second opening and that the first loop is defined by attaching a portion of the first side surface to a portion of the second side surface. Although Crouch fails to disclose that the second opening is larger it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have the first opening is sized to be smaller than the second opening since a change in the size of a prior art device is a design consideration within the skill of the art, however, it would not have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time of Applicant's invention to

have the first loop being defined by attaching a portion of the first side surface to a portion of the second side surface that allows moving, insertion and pulling of the second loop without twisting of the coupling device more than 45 degrees from the longitudinal axis of the coupling device. Especially since Crouch discloses that the loops are formed by folding the strap onto itself without any twists so that the first side surface of an end portion will be attached to the first side surface of another portion of the strap.

Regarding claim 23, Crouch discloses all the steps recited above for claims 19. Crouch fails to disclose that the coupling device further comprises a size adjustment collar slidably coupled to the second loop, that the first opening is sized to be smaller than the second opening and that the first loop is defined by attaching a portion of the first side surface to a portion of the second side surface. Regarding to the size adjustment collar, Elkins teaches a coupling device (10) for providing redundant attachment between an arm of a user and a device (30) (Fig. 6). The device comprises a first end having a loop (14) defining an opening (Figs. 1 and 6). The coupling device further comprises a size adjustment collar (16) slidably coupled to the loop (Figs. 1 and 6). The size adjustment collar is provided to allow the loop to fit over the user's arm and then be readily adjusted to a user's wrist to be secured thereto (C. 2, L. 56-58). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have the size adjustment collar slidably coupled to the loop as taught by Elkins in the second loop of the device disclosed by Crouch since this loop is the one that engages the user's wrist. Doing so, allows the loop to fit over the user's

arm and then be readily adjusted to a user's wrist to be secured thereto. Although Crouch fails to disclose that the second opening is larger it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have the first opening is sized to be smaller than the second opening since a change in the size of a prior art device is a design consideration within the skill of the art, however, it would not have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time of Applicant's invention to have the first loop being defined by attaching a portion of the first side surface to a portion of the second side surface that allows moving, insertion and pulling of the second loop without twisting of the coupling device more than 45 degrees from the longitudinal axis of the coupling device. Especially since Crouch discloses that the loops are formed by folding the strap onto itself without any twists so that the first side surface of an end portion will be attached to the first side surface of another portion of the strap.

Regarding claim 26, the same reasons for allowance of claim 19 apply to claim 26 that recites that the moving, inserting and pulling of the second loop is performed without substantially twisting the coupling device about the longitudinal axis of the coupling device instead of the 45 degrees from the longitudinal axis of the coupling device that is recited in claim 19.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably

accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Ruth C Rodriguez whose telephone number is (571) 272-7070. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 07:15 - 15:45.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Victor D. Batson can be reached on (571) 272-6987.

Submissions of your responses by facsimile transmission are encouraged. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is (571) 273-8300.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (571) 272-6640.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

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September 24, 2008

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